

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 1434

Introduced by Assembly Member Yamada

January 6, 2014

An act to amend Section 739.8 of the Public Utilities Code, relating to water corporations.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1434, as introduced, Yamada. Water corporations: low-income relief programs.

Under existing law, the Public Utilities Commission has regulatory authority over public utilities, including water corporations, as defined. Existing law authorizes the commission to fix the rates and charges for every public utility, and requires that those rates and charges be just and reasonable. Existing law requires the Public Utilities Commission to consider, and authorizes the commission to implement, programs to provide rate relief for low-income ratepayers of a water corporation.

This bill would instead require the commission to implement a program to provide rate relief for low-income ratepayers of a water corporation, as specified.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 739.8 of the Public Utilities Code is
2 amended to read:

1 739.8. (a) Access to an adequate supply of healthful water is
2 a basic necessity of human life, and shall be made available to all
3 residents of California at an affordable cost.

4 (b) ~~(1)~~ The commission shall ~~consider and may~~ implement
5 programs to provide rate relief for low-income ratepayers.

6 (2) *A program pursuant to paragraph (1) shall include a*
7 *discount of not less than 20 percent of the low-income ratepayer's*
8 *total bill amount.*

9 (3) *The rate relief shall be made available to all eligible*
10 *low-income ratepayers obtaining service from a water corporation*
11 *serving water at retail within the area in which the low-income*
12 *ratepayer is located.*

13 (c) The commission shall consider and may implement programs
14 to assist low-income ratepayers in order to provide appropriate
15 incentives and capabilities to achieve water conservation goals.

16 (d) In establishing the feasibility of rate relief and conservation
17 incentives for low-income ratepayers, the commission may take
18 into account variations in water needs caused by geography, climate
19 and the ability of communities to support these programs.

20 (e) *For purposes of this section, "low-income" means a*
21 *household with income that is equal or no greater than 200 percent*
22 *of the federal poverty guideline level. For one-person households,*
23 *program eligibility shall be based on two-person household*
24 *guideline levels.*